

LISTING OF THE CLAIMS

The following listing, if entered, replaces all prior versions of the claims in the present application.

1-54. (Cancelled)

55. (Currently Amended) A method comprising:
populating an access control list with a destination user group identifier, wherein
said destination user group identifier identifies a destination user group of
a destination,
said access control list comprises a source user group field configured to
store a source user group identifier and a destination user group field
configured to store a destination user group identifier,
said source user group comprises a plurality of source network devices,
said source user group is assigned to said source based on a role of
said source,
said destination user group comprises a plurality of destination network
devices, and
said access control list is configured to allow said source user group
identifier and said destination user group identifier to be compared.

56. (Original) The method of claim 55, wherein
said destination user group is assigned to said destination based on a role of said
destination.

57. (Original) The method of claim 55, wherein
said populating is performed by a network device and comprises
sending a request to another network device, and
receiving a response from said another network device, wherein
said response includes said destination user group identifier, and
said destination user group identifier identifies said destination
user group.

58. (Original) The method of claim 55, further comprising:
comparing a user group of a packet with said destination user group.

59. (Original) The method of claim 58, wherein
said user group of said packet is a source user group,
said destination user group is a user group of a destination of said packet, and
said destination is said destination of said packet.

60. (Original) The method of claim 59, wherein
said source user group is assigned to a source of said packet based on a role of
said source, and
said destination user group is assigned to said destination based on a role of said
destination.

61. (Original) The method of claim 59, wherein
said source user group is indicated by a source user group identifier stored in said
packet, and
said destination user group is indicated by a destination user group stored in a
network device receiving said packet.

62. (Original) The method of claim 59, further comprising:
determining said source user group; and
determining said destination user group by looking up said destination user group
in an access control list.

63. (Original) The method of claim 62, wherein
said access control list is a role-based access control list.

64. (Original) The method of claim 62, wherein said determining said source
user group comprises:
extracting a source user group identifier from said packet, wherein
said source user group identifier identifies said source user group.

65. (Currently Amended) A computer program product comprising:
a first set of instructions, executable on a computer system, configured to populate
an access control list with a destination user group identifier, wherein
said destination user group identifier identifies a destination user group of
a destination,
said access control list comprises a source user group field configured to
store a source user group identifier and a destination user group
field configured to store a destination user group identifier,
said source user group comprises a plurality of source network devices,
said source user group is assigned to said source based on a role of
said source,
said destination user group comprises a plurality of destination network
devices, and
said access control list is configured to allow said source user group
identifier and said destination user group identifier to be compared;
and
computer readable storage media, wherein said computer program product is
encoded in said computer readable storage media.

66. (Original) The computer program product of claim 65, further
comprising:
a second set of instructions, executable on said computer system, configured to
compare a user group of a packet with said destination user group.

67. (Original) The computer program product of claim 66, wherein said user group of said packet is a source user group, said destination user group is a user group of a destination of said packet, and said destination is said destination of said packet.

68. (Original) The computer program product of claim 67, further comprising:

a third set of instructions, executable on said computer system, configured to determine said source user group; and
a fourth set of instructions, executable on said computer system, configured to determine said destination user group by looking up said destination user group in an access control list.

69. (Original) The computer program product of claim 68, wherein said third set of instructions comprises:

a first subset of instructions, executable on said computer system, configured to extracting a source user group identifier from said packet, wherein said source user group identifier identifies said source user group.

70. (Currently Amended) An apparatus comprising:

means for populating an access control list with a destination user group identifier, wherein
said destination user group identifier identifies a destination user group of a destination,
said access control list comprises a source user group field configured to store a source user group identifier and a destination user group field configured to store a destination user group identifier,
said source user group comprises a plurality of source network devices,
said source user group is assigned to said source based on a role of
said source,
said destination user group comprises a plurality of destination network devices, and

said access control list is configured to allow said source user group identifier and said destination user group identifier to be compared.

71. (Original) The apparatus of claim 70, further comprising:
means for comparing a user group of a packet with said destination user group.

72. (Original) The apparatus of claim 71, wherein
said user group of said packet is a source user group,
said destination user group is a user group of a destination of said packet, and
said destination is said destination of said packet.

73. (Original) The apparatus of claim 72, further comprising:
means for determining said source user group; and
means for determining said destination user group by looking up said destination user group in an access control list.

74. (Original) The apparatus of claim 73, wherin said means for determining said source user group comprises:
means for extracting a source user group identifier from said packet, wherein
said source user group identifier identifies said source user group.

75-117. (Cancelled)